Sample Survey, a large number of children drop out from school because of economic reasons.

The other reasons given by the above mentioned survey for children discontinuing education include lack of interest in education and further studies, domestic chores, gender discrimination and failure.

The Central and State Governments have taken several measures to facilitate completion of schooling by children. These relate to increased access to schools, improvement in school infrastructure, incentives for SC/ST students and girls such as free textbooks, uniforms and attendance scholarships, implementation of Mid-Day Meels Programme and residential schools and hostels for SC/ST boys and girls.

District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), which is being implemented in 149 districts, have designed contextually relevant strategies to ensure better participation and retention of children at primary level.

Revival of Sick Public Sector Units

*157. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to news item captioned "Revival of sick public sector units top priority" which appeared in the Statesman, Calcutta dated the 20th April, 1998, regarding revival of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation (HFC) and Fertilizers Corporation of India (FCI);

(b) whether Government are aware that production of Durgapur remains suspended because of failure of primary reformer;

(c) if so, whether necessary replacements/repair work have been taken up on top priority for resumption of production; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF CHEMICALS AND FERTILIZERS (SHRI SURJIT SINGH BARNALA): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) to (d) The production operations of the Durgapur unit of Hindustan Fertilizer Corporation Limited (HFC) were suspended by the Management on 24.06.1997 after a fire in the primary reformer top.

The resource constraints of HFC have not permitted it to undertake the substantial capital investment required for carrying out major repairs/renovation for restarting production in the Durgapur unit.

Setting up of Health Sub-Centres in Villages

*158. SHRI AHMED PATEL: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have advised the State Governments to set up atleast 15 per cent of Health sub-centres in Scheduled Caste basties or villages having 20 per cent or more SC population;

(b) if so, how far the State Government of Gujarat have acted on the said advice and opened Health Sub-centres in such basties or villages during 1997-98 with details thereof; and

(c) what other health facilities are being provided to SC people of rural areas in Gujarat?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRI DALIT EZHILMALAI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) According to information received from Govt. of Gujarat, that Government has not established any new Sub-centre in 1997-98.

(c) In Gujarat, 1233 Sub-centres are located in villages having SC population of 250 or more. These Centres constitute about 17% of total Sub-centres in the State. However, SC families located anywhere in the State are entitled to avail of health facilities through a Sub-centre or Primary Health Centre or Community Health Centre located in nearby village/ town.

Study on Indian Railways by Asian Development Bank

*159. DR. B. B. DUTTA: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received an Asian Development Bank commissioned study of the Indian Railways;

(b) if so, the details thereof alongwith the reaction of the Government thereto;

(c) whether Government propose to implement some of the recommendations during 1997-98; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Asian Development Bank (ADB) had funded a Rail Sector Technical Assistance Study for carrying out a Strength Weakness, Opportunity, Threat (SWOT) Analysis of the Indian Railways (IR) and to indicate the policy actions required by IR in order to form a long term vision incorporating the priorities Indian Railways need to address over the next fourteen years. M/s Mckinsey & Co. and Swede Rail were appointed as consultants for this study by the ADB. The consultants submitted their report to the ADB with a copy to IR. As a result of the findings of the study, a 5 years programme has been drawn up by the Indian Railways.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.

Review of Recruitment Policy in Railways

*160. SHRI K.M. SAIFULLAH: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Railways' recruitment policy has been reviewed; if so, the details thereof; and

(b) the steps taken to curtail unnecessary expenditure in the Railways?

THE MINISTER OF RAILWAYS (SHRI NITISH KUMAR): (a) Review of the policies of recruitment is a continuous process. The recruitments to Group C & D posts on the Railways are made as per procedure laid down in relevant instructions, which essentially require that the vacancies should be notified and all eligible candidates applying against a notification should be considered. The recruitment to Group C posts is generally made through Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs).

While there has been no change in the policy stated above, the working of RRBs has been reviewed recently and a number of measures, have been taken to revamp the RRBs to restore their credibility.

The following important measures have been taken to revamp the same with the objective of restoring the credibility of RRBs and the confidence of the public at large and the candidates in particular in the fair and impartial functioning of these recruitment agencies:

(i) To constitute an apex body named Railway Recruitment control Board (RRCB) at Railway Board level with Member Staff, Railway Board